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ABSTRACT

This document describes first-year outcomes of the Arizona Transition Project, which is part of the National Head Start-Public School Transition Project. The project seeks to maintain the early benefits of Head Start through the primary grades and beyond. Outcomes for 1992-93 relating to children, families, system, and policy for the years K-3 were examined. Quantitative and qualitative data were gathered from over 100 children and their families enrolled in three Transition schools and three control schools in Phoenix, Arizona. Data were obtained through child assessments, interviews with families and key collaborators, questionnaires of teachers and family advocates, and observation. Findings indicate that the Transition Project has had substantial progress in achieving its objectives: Transition students are outscoring control students on most measures; Transition services are being implemented as planned; staff are enthusiastic about project goals and services; startup problems have been minimal and handled through a well-developed communication network; and people feel included in decision making. A summary of evaluation results is offered. Recommendations are made to use student achievement data to identify gaps in skills development, refine program implementation processes, develop linkages with other programs, and disseminate information to local and state policy makers. Eighteen tables, six figures, and an appendix that summarizes data-collection instruments are included. (LMI)

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HEAD START GOES TO SCHOOL

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Morrison Institute for Public Policy
School of Public Affairs, Arizona State University

Arizona Head Start-Public School Transition Project

HEAD START GOES TO SCHOOL

1992-93 Evaluation Report

by
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Submitted to:
Southwest Human Development, Inc.

September 1993

The Arizona Head Start-Public School Transition Project is funded under a grant to Southwest Human Development, Inc., from the Administration for Children, Youth and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This research was conducted by Morrison Institute under a contract with Southwest Human Development, Inc., Phoenix, Arizona.

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Head Start Goes to School: Arizona Head Start-Public School Transition Project

Executive Summary

One in five children in the United States, and in Arizona, is living below the federal poverty guideline. Poor children start school at a disadvantage, and many never achieve school success; thus, these growing numbers of poor children present tremendous challenges for the public school system. Almost 30 years ago, the Head Start preschool program was initiated to give low income children rich social and learning experiences to help prepare them for public school. Head Start has been distinguished from many other preschool programs by its comprehensive approach and the emphasis placed on supporting the development of the whole family. Besides educational outcomes for children, Head Start focuses equally on child health, parent involvement, and family development.

Previous research has shown immediate cognitive gains for Head Start children, but the gains diminish during the early years of elementary school. One of the major purposes of the *National Head Start-Public School Transition Project* is maintenance of these early benefits through the primary grades and beyond. The other stated purposes are developing successful collaborative strategies for delivering comprehensive services, and determining what impact comprehensive services in the primary grades have on children and families. The *Arizona Transition Project*, one of 32 projects across the country, is administered by Southwest Human Development, Inc. under a grant from the Administration for Children, Youth, and Families. The project evaluation is being conducted by the Morrison Institute for Public Policy, School of Public Affairs, Arizona State University.

Outcomes for the Arizona Transition Project are aligned with the national Transition Project goals, but are more specific regarding indicators of outcomes for children and families. The 1992-93 school year was the first full year of project implementation and the first year of data collection. The evaluation involves examining outcomes related to *children, families, system*, and *policy* for the years kindergarten through grade three. In the first year of this quasi-experimental longitudinal study, quantitative and qualitative data were gathered from over 100 children and their families enrolled in three Transition schools and three control schools in the city of Phoenix. Information was also obtained from staff and administrators from Head Start and the public schools. This report is the first in a series of annual evaluation reports to present evaluation results from the research study.

Preliminary data from the first year evaluation have established a baseline against which data from subsequent years can be compared. The data also provide indications of end-of-year differences between children from Transition and control schools and extensive information about the implementation process. Overall, year one data show promising trends for outcomes related to children and the delivery system, but family data do not reveal major differences between the Transition and control groups.

Children

Achievement trends during year one are encouraging, particularly the finding that Transition children scored significantly higher than did control children on three of six cognitive measures. In addition, children from both groups made significant gains from Fall to Spring on five of the measures, even though only about five months elapsed between testing periods. Percentile scores show that both Transition and control students gained percentile position from Fall to Spring on four of the six tests, showing a positive progression in learning. However, children in both groups began the year scoring low in comparison to a normative sample of same-age students and lost percentile rank from Fall to Spring on a passage comprehension test.

Two other important child outcomes relate *to adjustment to school* and *child health*. Children and their parents from both Transition and control groups rated the children's adjustment to school very positively, and school attendance patterns for the kindergarten year were virtually identical for both groups. Indicators of child health also revealed a positive picture for both Transition and control students, with teachers and parents rating the vast majority of children to be in good to excellent health and parents reporting a high level of satisfaction with their children's health care. Teachers expressed concerns about the conditions under which some children live at home -- some form of neglect or abuse is affecting almost one in five children in the study. Overall, the relatively positive ratings for children's adjustment to school and child health are somewhat surprising considering the extreme poverty reported by families. Substantial evidence elsewhere shows that economically disadvantaged children have a difficult time adjusting to school and that they receive inadequate health care. Possibly, the positive indicators are attributable to the children's Head Start experience, with its intensive family development and child health focus.

Repeated testing in the Spring of each year through the end of grade three holds the potential to answer the long-term question of whether gains will be maintained and enhanced as a result of Transition services, reversing the fade-out effect in achievement outcomes. Data from future years of the study will show whether continuation of those services results in more positive outcomes for Transition children compared to control children who do not receive services.

Families

Increasing the *self-sufficiency* of families is a major goal of the Transition Project. Baseline interview data revealed that, despite extremely low incomes, most families in both Transition and control groups report they are meeting their basic needs (e.g., food, shelter, clothing, medical care) through a combination of earnings and public assistance. Many families, however, lack resources essential to true self-sufficiency -- good jobs, money to pay bills and buy necessities, dependable transportation, and child care. Data from subsequent years of the evaluation should show whether Transition services increase indicators of self-sufficiency among Transition families.

In reference to the level of *parent involvement* in their children's education, both Transition and control parents reported a high level of involvement with children at home and at school, including more than half who said they volunteer regularly (more than once a month) at the school. In contrast, Transition school teachers felt that, while the Transition Project had increased the level of parent involvement, much more progress was needed in garnering parent support and participation in the classroom and the school. Several explanations are offered to explain this discrepancy: parents and teachers may hold different expectations for involvement, parents may be making socially acceptable responses to interview questions, or there may be a general lack of communication between parents and teachers about their involvement. Some staff indicated that teachers need to develop more receptive attitudes toward parents in the classroom and more skills in how to involve parents in meaningful ways.

System

The results showed strong evidence that *Transition services* and practices in schools are occurring according to the implementation plan. Transition school practices include activities such as exchange of information between preschool and kindergarten teachers about curriculum and about individual children and structured events held for parents of entering kindergartners.

A key change expected at the system level is the *relationship between Head Start and the public* schools. All data indicate that this relationship did change in the

desired direction -- the two organizations are collaborating to improve both educational and social services. The increased level of trust, respect, and collegiality between Head Start and public school staff was emphasized by staff during interviews. Public school personnel were particularly impressed with the new meaning and breadth the Transition Project brought to the concept of comprehensive services. While Transition schools had attempted to define and deliver comprehensive services prior to the Transition Project, they often lacked the resources to provide the intense family and health services provided by the project.

Classroom observation data show that indicators of *developmentally appropriate practice* (DAP) were more pronounced in Transition than control classrooms, and were most fully implemented in Head Start classrooms. Although Transition teachers rated themselves quite highly in use of DAP, some Head Start staff expressed a belief that public schools are somewhat lax in using the full range of DAP components. Continued training in DAP methods should help to refine the implementation of a developmental early childhood program.

Summary

The Transition Project has made substantial progress in achieving its objectives. Transition students are outscoring control students on most measures; staff are enthusiastic about project goals and services; Transition services are being implemented as planned; start-up problems have been minimal and have been dealt with through a well-developed communication network among staff; and, people feel they are included in making decisions that affect them. A summary of evaluation results from year one is shown in the table on the next page.

As with any newly implemented program, continuous formative changes are needed to keep the project on track. Several recommendations for project improvement based on year one findings are offered in the conclusions section of the report. Recommendations are made in the areas of using student achievement data to identify gaps in skill development, refining program implementation processes (e.g., delivery of services; parent involvement), developing linkages with other programs to insure institutionalization of Transition practices, and disseminating information about the project to local and state policy makers. Future reports will focus on progress made toward the Transition Project's desired outcomes and ongoing examination of how the provision of comprehensive services in the public schools affects low income children and families.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM YEAR-ONE TRANSITION PROJECT EVALUATION

Evaluation Question	Year-One Status
Children	
1. Do Head Start (HS) children in Transition classrooms maintain and/or show gains to a greater degree than HS children in control classrooms on the following indicators: a) cognitive skills b) social and emotional development c) general health d) adjustment to school?	*a) significant differences favoring Transition group* *b) more evidence needed* *c) no differences found* *d) no differences found*
2. Do HS children in transition classrooms exhibit more positive attitudes toward school than HS children in control classrooms?	*no differences found*
3. Do HS children in Transition classrooms experience a smoother transition and better continuity of programming from HS to kindergarten and from one primary grade to the next than HS children in control classrooms?	*positive trend; more evidence needed*
Families	
4. Do Transition families receive more social service support through the public school system and show more evidence of stability and self-sufficiency than control families?	*more evidence needed*
5. Do Transition families show better parenting skills and have more involvement in and support for education than control families?	*more evidence needed*
6. Do parents in Transition schools participate in and complete more literacy and English as a Second Language classes and workshops than parents in control schools?	*more evidence needed*
7. Do parents in Transition schools perceive home-school communication to be more effective and satisfactory than parents in control schools?	*no differences found*
System	
8. Do Transition schools provide a more coordinated service delivery system (i.e., continuous and comprehensive) than control schools?	*significant differences favoring Transition schools*
9. Do transition schools provide a more developmentally appropriate curriculum, more satisfactory communication strategies, better staff development, and more opportunities for parent participation than control schools?	*positive trend; more evidence needed*
10. Compared to control school teachers, are Transition school primary level teachers more skilled in working with the special needs of at-risk children and families?	*more evidence needed*
11. What does a successful collaborative process look like?	*evidence of collaboration includes common goals, shared decision-making, and open communication*
Policy	
12. Did the results of this project affect in state and local level public policies and level of fiscal support that reflect a comprehensive plan for addressing child and family needs in a holistic manner?	*too early for analysis*

Chapter

1 INTRODUCTION

Project Overview

The Arizona Head Start-Public School Transition Project is one of 32 federally funded demonstration projects nationwide designed to extend comprehensive Head Start services into the primary grades (K-3) in public schools. The Transition Project was designed to address some of the contradictory evidence gathered over the past 27 years about the benefits of Head Start. Some research shows that, while cognitive gains are attained initially, a fade-out effect occurs at about grade three (Barnett, et al., 1987: McKey, et al., 1985). Research on the effects of Head Start on social-emotional adjustment, child health, and family outcomes has been very limited, even though these areas are explicit goals of the Head Start program (Grimmett, 1989).

The study most often cited regarding the longitudinal effects of a comprehensive Head Start-like preschool for low income children is the Perry Preschool Study. The study involved following 62 children who attended Perry Preschool in 1962 into adolescence and early adulthood. At age 27, these students showed significantly better adjustment to adult life -- better educated, fewer incarcerations, higher income -- than peers who did not attend preschool (Schweinhart, Barnes, Weikart, Barnett, & Epstein, 1993).

While the Head Start comprehensive child development program is being considered for substantial expansion in the 1990s, the debate about its benefits and costs continues. Some argue that Head Start services, while comprehensive, are not of long enough duration, and that with longer duration of service, early cognitive gains will be maintained. Thus, the Head Start-Public School Transition Project, and the associated quasi-experimental research study, are designed to extend these services beyond the preschool years into the crucial first years of elementary school and to determine the impact of the services.

The Transition project is planned to extend for five years, long enough for two cohorts of children to receive transition services from kindergarten through grade three. The purposes of the project are threefold (Federal Register, 1991):

1) to develop successful strategies where Head Start programs, parents, local education agencies and other community agencies join together, in a collaborative effort, to plan and implement a coordinated and continuous program of comprehensive services for low-income children and their families beginning in Head Start and continuing through kindergarten and the first three grades of public school;

2) to test the hypothesis that the provision of these continuous comprehensive services will maintain and enhance the early benefits attained by Head Start children and their families; and

3) to determine the impact on children and families when comprehensive Head Start-like services are delivered over a period of time after the child has entered elementary school.

Grantees from each of the 32 local sites were charged with developing their own local plans and strategies for delivering services to attain the three stated purposes. Each site also was required to contract with an external evaluator to evaluate its program. In Arizona, Southwest Human Development (SHD), a non-profit social service agency, is the grantee. SHD operates Head Start programs that feed into five elementary school districts within the city of Phoenix; three of these districts are part of the Transition Consortium that collaboratively planned the Transition Project. The evaluation is being conducted by the Morrison Institute for Public Policy, School of Public Affairs, Arizona State University. The evaluation involves gathering data designated by the National Research Coordinating Team as the "national core data set," as well as data that are used to address evaluation questions of interest to the local site.

Program Description

The Transition Project is being implemented in three elementary schools in the city of Phoenix; three other schools serve as control sites that do not receive Transition services (see below). These districts and schools were chosen to be participants in the Transition Consortium because they enroll the majority of children who attend Head Start programs run by the grantee, Southwest Human Development, Inc.

The Transition Project is administrated by a project manager who reports to the director of Southwest Head Start. Five family advocates, housed at the Transition schools, work as Transition family case managers and report to the family advocate supervisor. A data coordinator provides data management and clerical support to the project. Day-to-day management decisions are made by the project manager. A Transition Advisory Council (TAC), consisting of representatives from Transition schools, district offices, Transition parents, and the community, provides input into larger programmatic decisions such as hiring of staff, facilities, and budget. Southwest Head Start has a Policy Council that serves as the governing board for the project and gives final approval to recommendations made by the TAC.

Collaboration among organizations to provide more comprehensive and integrated services is an essential feature of the Transition Project. Collaboration in the local project occurs at several levels: Transition schools and Head Start collaborate with social service and community agencies; Transition Project staff collaborate with staff from other programs within the schools that share common goals; Transition Project staff and participants collaborate with the university to provide data for the evaluation. Collaboration at the national level involves local grantees and evaluators sharing ideas, experiences and data, as well as working with the national funding and research organizations.

The project provides an array of comprehensive services to children and their families in four areas: *education, family development, health services, and parent involvement.*

- The ***education*** component focuses on implementing developmentally appropriate practice and curriculum in Transition classrooms. This is achieved through several strategies, including: intensive staff development for Transition teachers; provision of developmentally appropriate classroom materials; individual education plans for each child that include collaboration with the Head Start staff; continuity of programming between Head Start and kindergarten and from grade to grade through joint planning and activities; and enrichment in the arts for both children and teachers through school-based programs.

- ***Family development*** services are delivered primarily through case managers, or "Family Advocates." Family advocates have relatively low case loads of about 35 families, as compared with social workers in many schools who may serve hundreds of families. Family advocates are based at the school site and work

District	Transition School	Control School
Balsz	Crockett	Balsz
Creighton	Machan	Papago
Osborn	Encanto	Longview

intensively with the families of children in Transition classrooms. They make home visits, make referrals for needed social services and training that are identified by the families, provide regular parent education programs, and intervene for families in crisis situations. Family advocates work closely with classroom teachers to keep them apprised of situations in the home, follow-up on concerns teachers may have about a child's health or well-being, and provide a strong personal link between the home and the school.

- ***Health services*** include both physical and mental health services which are provided through referrals, linking families with special health events such as health fairs, and some limited direct services. Children receive health screenings, immunizations, dental services, and other needed physical and mental health services. Parents receive nutrition and health education through workshops and parent meetings. The health component also involves insuring a healthy and safe classroom environment and providing teaching resources for implementing nutrition and health curriculum.

- ***Parent involvement*** strategies consist of family advocates, teachers, and administrators working together to enhance both the quality and amount of parent participation in the school and in their child's education. This includes encouraging parents to participate as classroom volunteers, developing better teacher-parent communication lines and skills, involving parents in helping to make decisions about Transition activities, and working with children in positive ways at home. Monthly parent meetings are an important aspect of parent involvement. These meetings are run by parent officers who plan meeting agendas, identify speakers and parent trainers to develop parenting skills, and decide how to spend program funds. The belief guiding all parent involvement activities is that the parent is the primary caretaker and teacher of the child and should be involved in all decisions affecting the child.

Although the four basic program components are present in all three Transition schools, each site has substantial autonomy in deciding upon specific strategies for implementing the components. Thus, each of the schools' programs has unique features particularly appropriate for its population of children, families and teachers.

■ ■ ■

Chapter

2 METHODS

Evaluation Design

The Arizona Head Start - Public School Transition Project entails evaluation activities at both the national and local levels. As prescribed by the National Research Coordinating Team, the study incorporates a quasi-experimental design that involves comparing treatment and control groups. (In keeping with the terminology of the national study, the treatment group is herein referred to as the Transition group.) The Transition group consists of former Head Start children and families who receive Transition services; the control group consists of former Head Start children and families who do not receive those services. Although all children and their families enrolled in Transition classrooms receive services, only children who attended Head Start are included in the study. Students are pretested in Fall of the kindergarten year, and then tested at the end of kindergarten, grades one, two, and three; families of the children are interviewed during the same time periods. The national design involves two cohorts of children and families: cohort 1 began kindergarten in 1992-93 and is the group described in this report; cohort 2 will begin kindergarten in 1993-94 and will be included in subsequent evaluation reports.

The 1992-93 academic year was the first year of full implementation for the Transition Project. Quantitative data from year one provide a baseline at which children and families entered the study and show initial comparisons between children and families from Transition and control classrooms. Qualitative data illuminate the processes and strategies that are perceived to be working or to be barriers to successful implementation of the project.

The local evaluation is structured around a set of questions formulated through a content analysis of the project proposal, discussions with consortium members, and review and critique by an Evaluation Advisory Panel consisting of researchers from participating districts. The twelve evaluation questions, which fall into the major categories of children, families, system, and policy, are aligned with desired program outcomes and are listed below.

Children

1. Do Head Start (HS) children in Transition classrooms maintain and/or show gains to a greater degree than children in control classrooms on the following indicators: cognitive skills; social skills and emotional development; general health; positive adjustment to the public school setting?

2. Do HS children in Transition classrooms exhibit more positive attitudes toward school than children in control classrooms?

3. Do HS children in Transition classrooms experience a smoother transition and better continuity of programming from HS to kindergarten and from one primary grade to the next than HS children in control classrooms?

Families

4. Do Transition families receive more social service support through the public school system

and show more evidence of stability and self-sufficiency than control families?

5. Do Transition families show better parenting skills and have more involvement in and support for education than control families?

6. Do parents in Transition schools participate in and complete more literacy and English as a Second Language classes and workshops than parents in control schools?

7. Do parents in Transition schools perceive home-school communication to be more effective and satisfactory than parents in control schools?

System

8. Do Transition schools provide a more coordinated service delivery system (i.e., continuous and comprehensive) than control schools?

9. Do transition schools provide a more developmentally appropriate curriculum, more satisfactory communication strategies, better staff development, and more opportunities for parent participation than control schools?

10. Compared to control school teachers, are Transition school primary level teachers more skilled in working with the special needs of at-risk children and families?

11. What does a successful collaborative process look like?

Policy

12. Did the results of this project affect state and local level public policies and the level of fiscal support that reflect a comprehensive plan for addressing child and family needs in a holistic manner?

Instruments

Data were gathered using instruments required for the national research study as well as instruments developed locally to address questions of interest to the local evaluation. National data-set instruments include tests of student achievement, family interview protocols, teacher and principal surveys. Locally developed instruments include participant surveys and interview protocols to supplement the national core data set. These instruments focus on addressing questions related to the implementation process and institutional change. While some instruments were administered in both fall and spring (e.g., child testing), others were administered only once to obtain an end-of-year assessment of the area (e.g., School Climate). Collectively the instruments were designed to yield a combination of quantitative and qualitative data. A summary of all instruments is presented in Table 1.

Since much of the national data-set provides information which is peripheral to the local evaluation, only those parts directly related to the local evaluation were analyzed for this report. Individual instruments or items that are highly relevant to the local study were selected from the national data set for analysis by the evaluation director and the Transition Project manager. The instruments selected for inclusion in the local evaluation report are shown in bold type in the table. A brief description of each of the instruments used for the local evaluation is included in Appendix A.

Table 1

COMPLETE DATA SETS COLLECTED IN FALL 1992 AND SPRING 1993

DATA SET	FALL 1992	SPRING 1993
Child Data		
— **Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-Revised (PPVT-R)**	x	x
— **Test de Vocabulario en Imágenes Peabody (TVIP) ***	x	x
— **Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement-Revised subtests 22, 23, 24, 25**	x	x
— **Teacher Rating of Students *-L-***		x
— **What I Think of School**		x
— Social Skills Rating System (parent)	x	x
— Social Skills Rating System (teacher)		x
— **Your Child's Adjustment to School**		x
— **Child Health Questionnaire (parents)**	x	
— **Child Health Questionnaire (teachers)**		x
— School Archival Records Search		x
* Administered to Spanish-speaking students		
Family Data		
— **Family Resource Scale**	x	
— Family Routines Questionnaire	x	
— Parent Health/Depression	x	
— **Family Background and Update**	x	x
— Parenting Dimensions Inventory		x
— Neighborhood Scales		x
— **Local Family Interview Questions *-L-***		x
— **Family Services End-of-Year Summary *-T/L-***		x
System		
— School Climate Survey (parents)		x
— School Climate Survey (teachers)		x
— School Climate Survey (principals)		x
— **School Survey of Early Childhood Pgms (teachers)**		x
— School Survey of Early Childhood Pgms (principals)		x
— Classroom Assessment Profile		x
— Stages of Concern Questionnaire *-T/L-*	x	
— **Innovations Component Checklist *-T/L-***		x
— **Key Collaborator Interviews *-T/L-***		x
— **Observation/documentation of program activities *-T/L-***	x	x

T = Data collected for Transition schools only.
L = Instrument developed for local evaluation.
Items in bold print were analyzed for inclusion in the current report.

Data Collection

Signed informed consent forms explaining the purpose of the research and the types of data that would be collected were obtained from each child's parent or legal guardian prior to collecting data. Families who declined to sign an informed consent form are not included in the study. Families were assured confidentiality and anonymity and informed that they may withdraw from the study at any time. National core data were gathered from both Transition and control school participants; local data directly related to the Transition Project were collected only from Transition school participants. The types of instruments and data collection procedures for each type are described below.

Child Assessments

Child assessments were individually administered by professionals trained in the use of the *Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-Revised (PPVT-R)*, the *Test de Vocabulario en Imágenes Peabody (TVIP)*, and the *Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement-Revised*. Fall 1992 tests were administered between mid-November and mid-December; Spring 1993 tests were administered between late April and mid-May. Fall testing was done relatively late in the semester due to delays in obtaining signed informed consent forms from study participants. Approximately five months elapsed between Fall and Spring testing. Alternate forms of the tests were used for the two testing cycles.

Children whose primary language is English were administered the entire battery of tests in Fall and Spring; children whose primary language is Spanish were given the Hispanic-American Adaptation of the *PPVT* (the *TVIP*) in Fall and both the Spanish and English versions of the test in Spring. Bilingual examiners administered the Spanish version of the test. Since the *Woodcock-Johnson-Revised* is not available in Spanish, it was not administered to Spanish speaking children. Children were tested outside of their classrooms in a quiet area within each school.

Family Interviews

Family interviews were conducted in Fall 1992 and Spring 1993 by six trained interviewers. Two interviewers were trained at a session conducted by the National Research Coordinating Team; these interviewers then trained four others at the local site. Training included interviewing techniques and procedures, familiarity with the interview instrument, legal responsibilities for reporting child abuse or neglect, and practicing the interview with individuals similar to the Head Start population.

Three of the interviewers are fluent in both Spanish and English. A Spanish version of the instruments used in the family interview was used with families whose primary language is Spanish. In Fall 1992, a total of 101 interviews were done, thirty of them in Spanish. In Spring 1993 a total of 92 interviews were done, 21 of them in Spanish. Approximately 15 percent of families were not interviewed due to one of three reasons: the parent declined the interview, could not be reached after repeated attempts by phone and in person, or repeatedly cancelled or did not show up for scheduled interviews. Thus, it should be noted that the "self-selection" of families who agreed to be interviewed could create a bias in the data.

Interviews were done either at the parent's home or at the child's school, as mutually agreed upon by the interviewer and the parent. Each interview was approximately 45 minutes in length. Participants were paid $20 for each interview in accordance with guidelines for the national research study.

Local Surveys, Observations, and Interviews

Data collection for the local study was done primarily through questionnaires of teachers and family advocates, observations of key program activities, and interviews of all "key collaborators" (i.e., the key staff from Head Start and the schools who administer and implement the project). Surveys were distributed directly to teachers and family advocates during Transition Team meetings or sent in the mail. Observations included having an evaluator attend monthly Transition Team meetings at each of the three Transition schools, meetings of the Transition Advisory Council, and other key events related to the project. In total, approximately 72 hours of meetings were observed. Field notes by the evaluator documented meeting topics, group interactions, and membership; minutes from all meetings also were analyzed for this report.

Thirty-two "key collaborators" were interviewed, either individually or in small groups, to gather

information about perceptions of program strengths, areas for improvement, and changes they believed had occurred as a result of the Transition Project. Interviews were conducted at the school sites and included principals, superintendents, kindergarten teachers, Head Start teachers, family advocates, and administrators of the grant at Southwest Human Development.

Classroom Observations

Three members of the evaluation team were trained to observe classrooms using the *Classroom Assessment Profile*. Twenty indicators of a developmentally appropriate classroom were added to the instrument for the local evaluation. Each observer conducted about one-third of the observations, which were approximately 90 minutes in length, plus a 20-minute follow-up interview with the teacher. Observations were completed in nine Transition classrooms, 12 control classrooms, and five Head Start classrooms.

Participants

The original participants in the study were 119 children, and their families, who had completed a Head Start program during the 1991-92 school year and were enrolled in kindergarten during the 1992-93 school year at either a designated Transition school or control school. Eleven students and their families were lost through attrition during the school year, resulting in a total of 108 participants at the end of Spring 1993. School records show that the majority of these 11 students moved to other school districts within Maricopa County. One student moved from one Transition school (Machan) to another (Encanto) and remained in the study. The distribution of subjects by district and school is shown in Table 2.

Family demographic data were collected in Fall 1992 during family interviews. A statistical analysis of the results showed that Transition families and control families are statistically comparable on each demographic characteristic. Data are derived from responses made by the family member who was interviewed.

Of the 101 families interviewed in Fall 1992, 88 percent of the interviewees were the child's mother; six percent were the child's father; three percent were other relatives of the child; and three percent were non-relatives of the child. The average number of people living in the households was five: two adults and three children. Twenty-three percent of the households have only one adult residing there; 21 percent of the households have three or four adults living there, usually relatives of the mother or father. Figures 1 through 5 depict the demographic characteristics of Transition study families.

In reporting income, families were asked to report the amount of earned income for their household, before taxes, and excluding any public assistance. Families reported in ranges (e.g., $1200-$2400/year). The median range was $7200-$9600/year; therefore, the middle of this range (i.e., $8400) was selected for comparison to state, county, and city census data. As can be seen in the Figure 1, families participating in the Transition study have extremely low incomes compared to median household incomes for the city of Phoenix, Maricopa county, and the state. The median also is well below the 1993 federal poverty guideline for a family of five, which is $19,270.

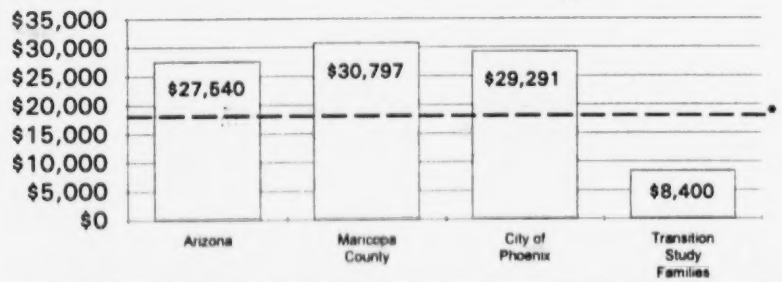
Table 2

DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS BY DISTRICT AND SCHOOL

District	Transition School # of Participants	Control School # of Participants	Total
Balsz	Crockett 21	Balsz 20	41
Creighton	Machan 21	Papago 18	39
Osborn	Encanto 13	Longview 15	28
Total	**55**	**53**	**108**

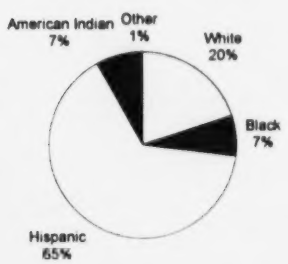
Family Demographics: Figures 1 - 5

Median Annual Household Income

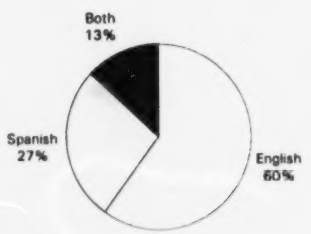


Source of Data for Arizona, Maricopa County, and City of Phoenix: 1990 Census Summary Tape File 3A - Arizona.
* 1993 Federal poverty guideline for a family of five is $19,270.

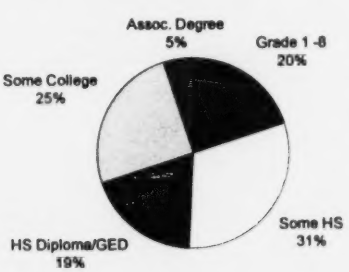
Family Race/Ethnicity



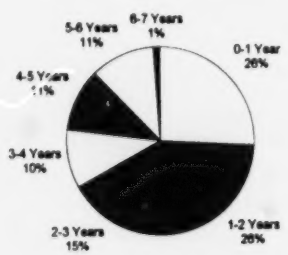
Language Most Often Spoken at Home



Highest Education Level Completed



Years at Current Address



The following characteristics provide a summary description of families participating in the study:

- The average household is composed of five people: two adults and three children.
- Almost half (48 percent) of families earn less than $7200 per year, compared to the 1993 federal poverty guideline of $19,270 for a family of five.
- Eighty percent of families are members of a minority group; 27 percent were born in Mexico.
- Many families are highly transient, with 52 percent having lived at their current address for two years or less.

Table 3

SCHOOL DEMOGRAPHICS - 1992-93

SCHOOL	Free/ Reduced Lunch	Chapter 1 Eligible	NEP/ LEP	Hispanic	White	Black	Am. Indian	Asian
TRANSITION								
Crockett	90%	42%	29%	65%	16%	9%	10%	0%
Encanto	63%	49%	20%	29%	49%	8%	10%	3%
Machan	90%	46%	45%	62%	26%	6%	5%	1%
CONTROL								
Balsz	96%	32%	25%	66%	16%	12%	5%	1%
Longview	84%	*	*	34%	34%	7%	25%	0%
Papago	88%	30%	46%	65%	20%	11%	4%	1%

* Data not submitted.

Schools

All six schools participating in the project are located within the city of Phoenix and serve high percentages of low income students, i.e., between 63 and 96 percent of students are on free-and-reduced lunch programs. Table 3 shows demographic data on the six participating schools.

■ ■ ■

Chapter

3 RESULTS

Child Outcomes

Results of measures of child outcomes in the cognitive, adjustment to school, and health areas are presented in this section.

Cognitive Skills

Students were administered the *Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-R (PPVT-R)*, and four subtests of the *Woodcock-Johnson Achievement Tests-Revised*, in the Fall and Spring of their kindergarten year. A few students whose primary language is Spanish were administered the Spanish version of the *PPVT-R*, the *TVIP*. Raw scores were used for the statistical analysis, which included repeated measures analysis of variance used to determine whether there is a significant difference between two or more average scores. Average raw scores and the conversion of these scores to percentiles are shown in Table 4. (Percentiles are calculated using age of children at time of testing and reflect their performance compared to a normal sample of same-age children.) Major findings on cognitive skills are the following:

- Students in the Transition and control groups did not differ significantly on the baseline Fall assessments on five of the six tests administered. The Transition group scored higher on the Calculation subtest of the *Woodcock-Johnson* ($p < .05$).

- Students in both the Transition and the control groups made significant gains from Fall to Spring on five of the six tests ($p < .001$), showing cognitive growth overall. Gains were not significant on the Passage Comprehension subtest of the *Woodcock-Johnson*.

- Significant differences favoring the Transition group were found on Fall to Spring scores on three of the measures: *PPVT-R* ($p < .05$), the Calculation subtest of the *Woodcock-Johnson* ($p < .001$), and the Applied Problems subtest of the *Woodcock-Johnson* ($p < .05$).

- Percentile scores show that children in both groups gained percentile position on four of the six tests from Fall to Spring, relative to a normative group of same-age test-takers. Children lost percentile position on two tests.

Teachers completed the *Teacher Rating of Students* in which they were asked to rate students on a scale of one to four in eight areas related to performance and success in school. The purpose of this instrument was to supplement standardized achievement test data with an indicator of teacher judgments about children's progress during the kindergarten year. The eight areas assessed were the following: self-esteem, cooperative learning, physical development, family support, interest in literacy, language development, comfort in school environment, and logical-scientific-mathematical thinking. Transition school teacher ratings were slightly higher than control school teacher ratings on five of the eight areas, with the largest difference in the area of family support.

Table 4

Average Test Scores and Significance Levels by Treatment Group

Test	Group (n)	Fall Score	(%-ile)	Spring Score	(%-ile)	p <
PPVT-R (vocabulary)	Transition (n=33)	52.45	(18)	63.09	(27)	.05
	Control (n=35)	47.05	(10)	55.57	(13)	--
TVIP (Spanish-vocabulary)	Transition (n=11)	35.81	(30)	46.00	(45)	--
	Control (n=7)	30.71	(19)	36.57	(23)	--
WJ-22 (letter-word recognition)	Transition (n=40)	8.97	(18)	12.40	(21)	--
	Control (n=41)	9.24	(21)	12.44	(21)	--
WJ-23 (passage comprehension)	Transition (n=40)	1.20	(57)	1.28	(22)	--
	Control (n=41)	.93	(52)	1.58	(36)	--
WJ-24 (calculation)	Transition (n=40)	1.30	(35)	2.90	(43)	.001
	Control (n=41)	.29	(12)	1.41	(17)	--
WJ-25 (applied problems)	Transition (n=40)	15.75	(44)	17.50	(37)	.05
	Control (n=41)	14.02	(22)	15.95	(21)	--

Adjustment to School

The children and their parents both rated their perceptions of adjustment to school in Spring of the kindergarten year. Results of the student responses to the *What I Think of School* questionnaire are shown in Table 5. The average overall ratings on this three-point scale, with three representing the most positive rating, were 2.74 for the control group and 2.72 for the Transition group. There were no significant differences in student ratings between students in Transition or control schools on the overall average or on any of the eight individual items. Further, no differences occurred between individual schools. Average ratings show that students overall rated all items quite highly, with none rated lower than 2.52 on the three-point scale.

Parents rated their child's adjustment to school in several areas, as well as their own satisfaction with the school program (see Table 6). Average ratings were generally high, with overall means of 8.38 for the Transition group and 7.98 for the control group on the 10-point scale. Analysis of variance showed the ratings by parents in Transition schools to be significantly higher than those of parents in control schools on item 4 and item 8 ($p < .05$), and Transition parents gave slightly higher average ratings on all eight items. Another indicator of a child's adjustment to school is attendance. The average attendance for the 175-day school year was 161 days for Transition school students, a 92 percent attendance rate, and 160 days for control school students, a 91 percent rate. This slight difference was not statistically significant.

Table 5

What I Think of School - Average Ratings by Students

Item	Trans. (n=55)	Control (n=50)	p <
1. How much do you like school?	2.84	2.86	--
2. How well ("good") do you do at your school work, compared to others in your class?	2.56	2.52	--
3. How important is it to you to do well ("good") in school?	2.81	2.76	--
4. How hard do you try at school?	2.74	2.64	--
5. How important is it to your parents that you do well in school?	2.72	2.64	--
6. How do you get along with your teacher?	2.76	2.90	--
7. How do you get along with the other children at school?	2.58	2.74	--
8. How much does your teacher help you learn new things?	2.74	2.86	--
TOTAL	2.72	2.74	--

(Based on 3-point scale with "3" being the most positive response.)

Table 6

Your Child's Adjustment to School - Average Ratings by Parents

Item	Trans. (n=46)	Control (n=43)	p <
1. How much do you think your child likes school?	9.10	8.51	--
2. How much effort do you think your child puts into school?	8.21	8.00	--
3. How well do you think your child actually does in school?	7.71	7.60	--
4. How well does your child get along with his or her teacher?	9.04	8.16	.05
5. How well does your child get along with other children at school?	7.91	7.88	--
6. How pleased are you with the school program in terms of helping your child learn basic skills to get ready for first grade?	8.17	8.06	--
7. How pleased are you with the school program in terms of meeting your child's needs -- social and emotional?	8.19	7.79	--
8. How would you rate your child's overall adjustment to school?	8.73	7.86	.05
TOTAL	8.38	7.98	

(Based on a 10-point scale with "10" being the highest rating.)

Child Health

Indicators of child health and well-being were derived from the Fall family interview and the Spring teacher questionnaire. One indicator of child health is the availability of medical insurance. Ninety-one percent of families reported that they have some form of medical insurance, with 61 percent covered by AHCCCS.

A large majority of both Transition and control families also reported that they are satisfied or very satisfied with their health insurance, with only seven and 12 percent respectively stating they are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. Results were similar for satisfaction with health care: 93 percent from both groups said they are satisfied or very satisfied with the health care received by their child. Analysis of variance showed no significant differences between groups on any of the indicators. Responses to items about child health reported in the family interview are shown in Table 7.

Teachers rated the health and well-being of the children in their classrooms on the Spring questionnaire. Teachers rated the general health of 64 percent of their children as excellent or very good, 30 percent as good, three percent as fair, and two percent as poor. When asked if they had concerns about the child's health, safety, or hygiene, teachers indicated no concerns for 82 percent of their students, but indicated concerns for the remaining 18 percent. Of teachers who responded "Yes" to having concerns about a child, the reasons fell into three major categories: concerns about the

Table 7

Child Health and Safety - Parent Response in Percents

Item	Transition (n=54)	Control (n=46)
Rating of child's general health:		
▪ Excellent or very good	75	68
▪ Good	18	24
▪ Fair	6	7
Number of illnesses in the past 12 months:		
▪ 0	22	17
▪ 1 - 3	54	54
▪ 4 - 6	18	19
▪ 10 or more	6	10
Satisfaction with child health care:		
▪ Satisfied or very satisfied	93	93
▪ Dissatisfied or very dissatisfied	7	7
Satisfaction with health insurance for child:		
▪ Satisfied or very satisfied	93	88
▪ Dissatisfied or very dissatisfied	7	12
Has seen professional for emotional or behavioral problem:		
▪ Yes	8	12
▪ No	92	88
Has taken medication to control behavior:		
▪ Yes	7	2
▪ No	93	98
Concerned about child's eating or nutrition:		
▪ Yes	35	29
▪ No	65	71
Frequency of dental visits:		
▪ At least once/year	73	85
▪ Every two years	3	0
▪ Less than every two years	3	2
▪ When needed	15	7
▪ Don't know	5	5
Guns or firearms in the home:		
▪ No	80	81
▪ Yes (1,2,or 3 guns)	20	19

child's home life such as neglect, abuse, or family violence; concerns about problems related to fatigue or illness; and concerns about emotional problems. Percentages between Transition and control groups were virtually identical.

Family Outcomes

Select family interview items from the national data set relevant to local evaluation questions were analyzed as well as locally developed interview questions. Most of the results presented here establish a baseline against which future data will be compared. No differences were found to indicate that the Transition and control groups were significantly different at the beginning of the project. Data about families may be divided into three types: financial resources, social resources, and parent involvement with the child and in the education process. Results are presented in this section.

Financial Resources

The *Family Resource Scale*, part of the Fall 1992 family interview, asked respondents to rate the adequacy of resources arranged hierarchically from most basic needs, such as food, to least basic, such as travel/vacation. Table 8 summarizes the data showing percentages of parents who perceive each resource as either "not at all adequate"; "seldom or sometimes adequate"; "usually or always adequate"; or "not applicable." The "not applicable" responses were combined for the analysis with the "usually or always" adequate category as recommended by the instrument developer.

The first eleven items on the scale are clearly the most essential resources needed by families.

Across these 11 items, a large majority of the participants indicated that their resources were usually or almost always adequate.

Among the less positive results from the *Family Resource Scale* were the following:

- 55 percent of Transition respondents and 41 percent of control respondents said that money to buy necessities was sometimes, seldom, or not at all adequate
- 40 percent of respondents from both groups reported that a good job for themselves or their spouse is sometimes, seldom, or not at all adequate
- more than one-third of respondents from both groups indicated that dependable transportation was sometimes, seldom, or not at all adequate
- about one-third of respondents from both groups reported that child-care was sometimes, seldom, or not at all adequate

The Fall family interview included a question about the type of public assistance families receive and showed that 74 percent of families receive some form of assistance. Table 9 shows the percentages of families receiving 15 different benefits, rank ordered by percentage.

The most common assistance was food stamps, and the second most often cited form of assistance was medical assistance. This figure is lower than expected, possibly because it was not interpreted as including AHCCCS, the form of health insurance for 61 percent of respondents. About one-third of the families reported that they receive Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC).

Social Resources

Locally developed questions which address participants' knowledge and use of the social service system were asked during the Spring family interview. Simple descriptive statistics showed the following comparisons between Transition and control groups:

- Eighty-four percent of Transition families and 79 percent of control families reported that they would know where to go for social, health, or community services. Of those who responded that they would know where to go for assistance, 56 percent from the Transition group, but only 17 percent from the control group, indicated that they would seek assistance from the school or from Head Start Transition Project staff.
- Fifty-eight percent from the Transition group and 60 percent from the control group reported that they use community resources.
- Thirty-three percent of Transition group respondents and 55 percent of control group respondents said they participate in community activities such as Little League or Scouting.

Table 8

Family Resource Scale - Response Frequencies in Percents*

To what extent are the following resources adequate:	Not at all adequate		Seldom/Sometimes		Usually/Always	
	Trans.	Control	Trans.	Control	Trans.	Control
1. Food for 2 meals a day	3	0	12	10	85	90
2. House or apartment	7	2	15	12	78	85
3. Money to buy necessities	14	7	41	34	46	59
4. Enough clothes for your family	7	2	30	28	63	70
5. Heat for your house or apartment	15	5	5	10	80	85
6. Indoor plumbing/water	3	3	8	7	88	90
7. Money to pay monthly bills	10	7	25	27	65	66
8. Good job for yourself or spouse	25	13	15	27	60	60
9. Medical care for your family	10	5	10	12	80	83
10. Public assistance (SSI, AFDC, Medicaid, etc.)	7	25	15	10	78	65
11. Dependable transportation	15	10	23	27	62	63
12. Time to get enough sleep/rest	7	5	30	22	63	73
13. Furniture for your home or apartment	2	7	29	17	69	76
14. Time to be by self	28	20	25	37	47	44
15. Time for family to be together	2	5	14	27	85	68
16. Time to be with children	2	2	14	20	85	78
17. Time to be with spouse or close friend	18	15	31	42	51	43
18. Telephone or access to a phone	10	0	7	0	83	100
19. Babysitting for your child(ren)	19	20	20	24	61	56
20. Child care-day care for your child(ren)	22	22	17	10	60	68
21. Money to buy special equipment/supplies	30	15	25	32	45	54
22. Dental care for your family	13	20	19	7	68	73
23. Someone to talk to	12	17	24	29	64	54
24. Time to socialize	19	10	47	51	34	39
25. Time to keep in shape and looking nice	17	22	41	46	41	32
26. Toys for your child(ren)	10	2	27	32	63	66
27. Money to buy things for self	26	20	36	59	38	22
28. Money for family entertainment	25	20	43	44	33	37
29. Money to save	62	55	17	35	22	10
30. Travel/vacation	60	59	22	29	18	12

* % may not equal 100 due to rounding. (n=54 Transition; n=46 Control)

Transition families answered 11 additional local questions related to their knowledge of, participation in, and satisfaction with the Transition Project. When asked to describe their understanding of the Transition Project, 56 percent of the respondents described benefits such as getting children ready for first grade or helping children's social development. Five percent of respondents specifically described the continuation of Head Start services into the public school.

Services of Transition Project family advocates include making home visits, helping families to assess their needs and set goals, and making referrals to other agencies. Families were asked about the number of these contacts made during the year. Family advocates also reported their number of contacts on an end-of-year summary report. Responses made by families and summary figures from family advocates were compared. In most cases, the average responses of parents and the family advocate end-of-year summary reports matched very

Table 9

Public Assistance - Percent of "Yes" Responses

Type of Assistance	Trans.	Control
Food Stamps	68	54
Medical Assistance	43	44
AFDC	37	29
WIC	20	7
Social Security Insurance	10	12
Public Housing Assistance	12	10
Unemployment Insurance	7	7
Nutritional Services	2	5
Home Visits	5	0
Mental Health Services or Counseling	0	2
Energy Assistance Program	2	0
Other Assistance	0	5
Social Services	0	0
Parenting Education	2	0
Literacy Education	0	0

closely, as shown in Table 10. The nine Transition classroom teachers were asked during interviews how they felt the addition of the family advocate had affected the delivery of social services to children and families. In all cases, the teachers felt the family advocate filled a vital role in the delivery of social services. Several teachers said that the addition of the family advocate had increased the participation of Spanish-speaking parents. Most attributed this, in part, to the family advocates speaking the Spanish language. It was also noted that the addition of the family advocate had taken the pressure off teachers and overworked school social workers. Although it was agreed by most that the delivery of direct services such as food and clothing had been excellent, not all families who could benefit from services were utilizing them effectively. Families' lack of follow through on referrals was noted as a frustration for some of those involved in the Transition Project.

Parent Involvement

In the Fall family interview, parents responded to a series of questions about the occurrence of certain family routines. Some of these items provide an indication of parental involvement with children in the home; others indicate parent involvement with their child's education. No significant differences were found

Table 10

Comparison of Interview Responses and Family Advocate End-of-Year Report

Question		Family Interview (n=36)	Family Advocate Report (n=56)
About how many times in the past year has your family advocate visited with you **in your home**?	Average	2.7	2.3
Did you talk with your Family Advocate about **needs** your family may have?	yes	66%	71%
Did you talk with your Family Advocate about **setting goals** for the year?	yes	31%	41%
About how many times in the past year did your Family Advocate **refer** you to other organizations or agencies for needed health or social services?	Average	2.0	1.9

Table 11

Family Routines at Home - Response Frequencies in Percents*

How often does this currently happen in your family?	everyday		3-5 times/wk		1-2 times/wk		almost never	
	T	C	T	C	T	C	T	C
Parent(s) have some time during the day for just talking with the children.	73	68	22	20	5	10	0	2
Parent(s) and children play together.	50	44	30	42	18	12	2	2
Parent(s) read or tell stories to the children.	35	17	43	41	18	34	3	7
	everyday		2-3 times/wk		once a month		≤ once a mo.	
Family has certain "family time" when they do things together at home.	62	54	15	29	8	5	15	12

* % may not equal 100 due to rounding. (n=54 Transition; n=46 Control)

between responses of families in Transition and control groups. Questions related to parent involvement with children in the home are shown in Table 11; questions related to parent participation in school are shown in Table 12.

Overall, parents from both groups reported being highly involved with their child, with about half responding that they play with their child daily. A large majority reported having some time to talk with their child every day, and reading with their child at least three times per week. Over half reported having "family time" every week.

All Transition parents and 90 percent of control parents reported discussing their child's school day with him or her daily. Twenty percent of parents from both groups reported participating in school activities daily. This item may have been interpreted to include helping with homework or other school related activities.

Table 12

Parent Participation in Child's Education - Response Frequencies in Percents*

How often does this currently happen in your family?	everyday		1-2 times/wk		1-3 times/wk		once a mo.	
	T	C	T	C	T	C	T	C
Parent(s) discuss the child's school day with him or her.	100	90	-	10	-	-	-	-
Parent(s) participate in school activities planned for parents.	20	20	10	17	43	29	27	34
Parent(s) volunteer in the child's school.	18	17	18	2	25	29	33	41
Parent(s) keep in touch with the child's teacher or other school staff to be sure they know how things are going.	43	39	18	17	25	20	13	22

* % may not equal 100 due to rounding. (n=54 Transition; n=46 Control)

Responses from the nine Transition classroom teachers during interviews indicated that all thought parent involvement had improved, particularly involvement with children at home; a few teachers reported that there was no increase in parents volunteering in the classroom. There was strong consensus that the parent meetings initiated by family advocates were an effective parent involvement strategy. There was agreement among most teachers that involvement of Hispanic and monolingual Spanish-speaking parents had increased through the Transition Project. This was often attributed to the provision of Spanish language translation services at parent meetings, ESL services, and the efforts of family advocates to increase their participation in school activities.

Some teachers mentioned the need for more knowledge about how best to utilize parents in the classroom, and noted that when parents do not feel useful in the classroom they do not return. Other barriers to parent participation included parents' lack of transportation and the need for increased variety in the ways that parents can participate.

Family advocates' end-of-year summaries provide another indication of parent involvement in education. The average number of family participation hours recorded for the year was 46 hours. There was considerable variance in the amount of participation, with a range from one hour to 382 hours.

Parent satisfaction with communication between school and the home was assessed through three local interview questions in the Spring interview (see Table 13). Parents from the Transition group reported higher levels of satisfaction with communication with their school than parents from the control group. Transition group parents also felt more included in the decision-making process than control group parents. With regard to providing teachers with input about their child, 93 percent of Transition families compared to 97 percent of control families reported having an opportunity to do this.

Table 13

Home-School Communication - Response Frequencies

Question		Transition (n=43)	Control (n=36)
Are you asked your opinion about important decisions made by the administration about school policies or activities?	yes	50%	36%
Are you satisfied with the communication between your child's school and your home?	yes	100%	82%
Do you have an opportunity to give input to the teacher about your child's unique qualities and needs?	yes	93%	97%

System Outcomes

One of the overarching goals of the Transition Project is to stimulate institutional change within the education system. Change is expected in how schools teach children in the classroom, interact with families, and link with the social service system to provide services. A major emphasis of the local evaluation has been to gather data, primarily qualitative, about systemic change. This has been done through over 70 hours of observation of key program meetings and activities at the school sites, collection of survey data that reflect the perceptions of program staff, and interviewing 32 key stakeholders in the program. This section includes the results of the qualitative evaluation with respect to three areas: provision of transition services, use of developmentally appropriate practice in the classroom, and issues related to the program implementation process.

Transition Services

The delivery of Transition services was assessed through the *School Survey of Early Childhood Programs*, a teacher and family advocate version of the *Innovation Component Checklist (ICC) for Transition Services*, and key collaborator interviews. Interviews included questions related to

Table 14

School Survey of Early Childhood Programs - Average Ratings by Teachers

Item	Transition (n = 9)	Control (n = 13)	p <
1. Records transferred to you upon students entering your kindergarten class.	3.0	1.3	.01
2. Communication between you and the previous caregiver/teacher about the entering student.	2.0	1.4	.05
3. Communication between you and their caregivers / teacher about curriculum issues.	1.9	1.4	--
4. Development of a curriculum coordinated with children's prekindergarten programs.	2.7	1.4	.01
5. School visits by entering kindergarten children and their parents.	2.9	2.0	.05
6. Formal arrangements for school visits by parents of entering kindergarten students.	3.2	1.8	.01
7. Parents of entering kindergarten children informed of their rights and responsibilities in the public school system.	3.1	2.7	--
8. Parents involved in classroom activities aimed at smoothing children's transition into public schools.	2.7	1.9	.05
9. Prekindergarten staff participate in joint workshops with school staff on curriculum, child development, etc.	1.8	1.0	.01
10. Prekindergarten staff share information about an individual child's developmental progress with school staff.	1.8	1.0	.01
11. Prekindergarten staff provide assistance for children experiencing difficulty in school adjustment.	3.0	1.4	.001
12. Prekindergarten staff talk with children and their parents to help prepare them for the transition to public school kindergarten.	2.7	1.2	.01
TOTAL	**2.6**	**1.6**	**.001**

For items 1-8, teachers were asked to respond about the percentage of students for which the activities occur. For items 9-12, they were asked what percentage of time the activities occur: 1 = 0-25%; 2 = 26-50%; 3 = 51-75%; 4 = 76-100%

Table 15

Implementation of Transition Services
Average Ratings by Transition Teachers

Transition Component	Average Rating
Social services.	4.7
Communication/collaboration between family advocates and kindergarten teachers.	4.6
Parent services and involvement.	4.6
Child health services.	4.3
Transfer of student records from Head Start to kindergarten	3.8
Transition activities for children and families.	3.8
Communication/collaboration between Head Start and kindergarten teachers.	3.1
Child educational services (i.e., individual education plans).	3.1

(Responses are based on a 5-point scale with "1" indicating component is not implemented at all and "5" indicating component is fully implemented.)

Table 16

Implementation of Transition Services
Average Ratings by Family Advocates

Transition Component	Average Rating
Communication/collaboration between family advocates and kindergarten teachers.	4.7
Documentation of program implementation activities.	4.5
Family services.	4.2
Parent involvement.	4.0
Smooth transition of children from grade to grade, kindergarten through 3.	4.0
Child health services.	3.5
Collaboration with special program/social service staff at school and community levels.	3.5

(Responses are based on a 5-point scale with "1" indicating component is not implemented at all and "5" indicating component is fully implemented.)

perceptions of Transition, Head Start, and public school staff about the delivery of social and health services. The *ICC's* were developed to gather information from teachers and family advocates about the degree to which Transition services were being implemented. The *School Survey* is part of the national data set and was completed in the Spring by both Transition and control school teachers. It shows their ratings of the degree to which linkages are made between preschool and public school staff to provide coordinated programming.

The *School Survey of Early Childhood Programs* reflects the degree of implementation of key practices that signify Transition. Teachers reported the percent of children for which certain Transition practices occurred, or the percent of time Transition activities occurred. A rating of 4.0 reflects the highest degree of implementation of these practices and activities. Results are shown in Table 14. Transition teachers rated all 12 items higher than control teachers. Analysis of variance showed significant differences beyond the .05 level for 10 of the 12 items.

Transition teachers and family advocates completed a survey in early Spring 1993, which asked them to rate the degree to which transition services were being implemented. The survey included descriptions of program components and degrees of implementation, from not implemented (rated 1) to fully implemented (rated 5). Component descriptions are slightly different for the two

surveys to account for the different roles of the teachers and the family advocates in the project. Tables 15 and 16 show results rank ordered by average rating.

Teachers rated four areas relatively high: communication with family advocates; parent services and involvement; child health; and social services. The two lowest rated areas are communication with Head Start teachers and child educational services. Family advocates concur with a high rating for communication between themselves and teachers. However, they rate degree of implementation for parent involvement, child health, and family services somewhat lower than do teachers.

Interview data were strongly positive regarding the delivery of Transition services to children and families in Transition classrooms. When asked how children and families were handled differently prior to the Transition Project, there was consensus among interviewees that Transition had created positive changes in providing comprehensive services to children and families. Some of the common themes related to this question are summarized below:

- Prior to the Transition Project, social and health services tended to be provided only in crisis situations due to lack of staff and resources.

- The Transition Project addresses the needs of the whole child and the whole family and involves a much more inclusive, formalized approach toward families.

- Transition provides teachers with much more information and insight about what is happening in children's lives that affects their schooling.

Developmentally Appropriate Practice

Developmentally appropriate practice (DAP) is the cornerstone of the educational component of the Transition Project. DAP has been a focus in Arizona for the past several years, and many districts have used state funding for K-3 education and at-risk programs to train teachers in this approach. In addition, staff development from the Transition Project has focused almost exclusively on DAP. Transition teachers completed a survey in which they rated the degree to which they were implementing DAP in their classrooms, with one (1) indicating no implementation and five (5) indicating full implementation of each component. Responses are shown in Table 17.

Transition classroom teachers generally rated themselves quite high in implementing DAP, with seven of nine components rated four or higher on the five-point scale. The two areas rated lowest were *assessment* and *staffing*.

Both of these areas tend to be out of the direct control of teachers and are more reflective of school or district policies and procedures for assessing student progress and hiring qualified staff. The issue of teachers being required to use developmentally inappropriate assessments was discussed by teachers and principals during interviews. Interviews also revealed that teachers associated the Transition Project more with social

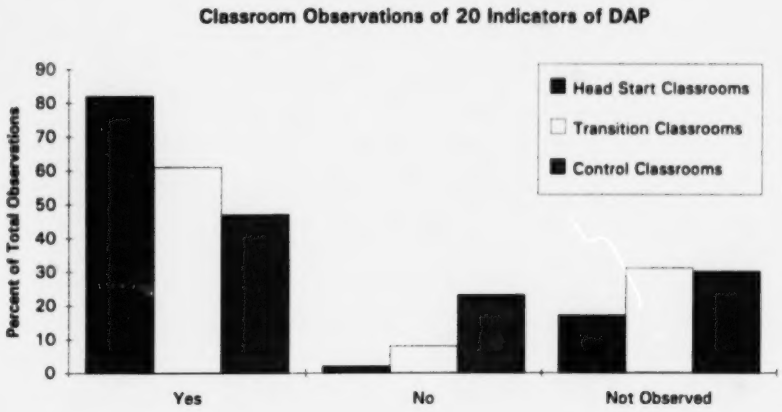
Table 17

Implementation of Developmentally Appropriate Practice
Average Ratings by Transition Teachers

DAP Component	Average Rating
Teacher - child interaction.	4.7
Cultural and linguistic integration.	4.7
Curriculum.	4.2
Instruction.	4.1
Assessment.	3.9
Environment and materials.	4.4
Parent - teacher relationships.	4.1
Teacher qualifications.	4.4
Staffing.	3.6

(Responses are based on a 5-point scale with "1" indicating component is not implemented at all and "5" indicating component is fully implemented.)

Figure 6



and health services for children and families than with DAP, which they felt they had been implementing prior to the project's inception. However, many expressed that a developmental orientation to teaching is essential to being a teacher in the Transition Project because it is congruent with the approach used in Head Start.

Additional information about DAP implementation was gained by classroom observations conducted by evaluators to document the degree to which DAP is being used in 26 Head Start, Transition, and control classrooms. Observations involved the use of an instrument that is part of the national core data set, plus a locally developed instrument that includes 20 indicators of a developmental classroom. For each indicator, the observer scored "Yes, "No," or "Not Observed." This section presents results only from the local instrument, since data from the national instrument are not yet available. Figure 6 depicts the percent of total observations that were scored in each category for each group of classrooms.

Control school classrooms received the lowest number of "Yes" ratings, Transition school classrooms were slightly higher, and Head Start classrooms received the highest percentage of "Yes" ratings.

Project Implementation

Data regarding the process of implementing the Transition Project and institutional change during year one of the project are derived from evaluator observations and key collaborator interviews. Interview data generally are corroborated by results from other data sources presented in this section. Several common themes emerged from these data that reflect the consensus of the holders in the project from both the schools and Head Start and are summarized in this section.

Transition Teams were the mechanism by which many aspects of the Transition Project were implemented. Transition Teams were formed at each of the three Transition schools early in Fall 1992. The Transition Project manager initiated the formation of the teams, which were originally composed of the project manager, Transition classroom teachers, Transition family advocates, and the school principal. Each team met once per month for approximately two hours after school.

The evolution of the Transition Teams over the course of the year was observed and documented by the evaluator. Results of these observations showed that, initially, Transition teachers voiced concerns about committing to "another monthly meeting" in addition to what they perceived as already overflowing teaching and meeting schedules. As the teams evolved, however, they became the primary mechanism for communicating about and planning Transition activities, and putting into practice the underlying principles of the Transition concept. Although each team had its own unique character, several features of the Transition Team process were common across all teams, as summarized below:

Expanding membership: By about the second meeting, each of the three teams decided they needed to expand their membership to include Head Start staff. This involved, at minimum, adding the Head Start teachers and

Head Start family advocates as regular members. In early Spring, the teams decided it was time to add first grade teachers who would be part of Transition the next year.

Taking care of business: Team meetings were the vehicles for tending to the business of Transition. Decisions were made about what activities would be planned between kindergarten and Head Start teachers, when they could meet to discuss individual children, when they could observe each other's classrooms, how they could improve parent participation in certain activities, and other program matters.

Creating ownership: Early in the project year, team meetings -- and the Transition Project in general -- seemed to be events brought to teachers from the outside. Members relied on the project manager to set the agenda and facilitate the meetings. By the end of the year, team members clearly viewed Transition as their program and an important part of their school. Team members took turns facilitating the meetings and setting the agenda. Meetings proceeded even when the project manager was not able to attend.

Discussing philosophy: Although team meetings had a logistical function, they also provided a forum for discussing the philosophy of Transition. Teachers discussed their own attitudes and the attitudes of others in the school toward children and families. When discussing the topic of "kindergarten readiness" in one meeting, a transition teacher commented, "We shouldn't be asking children to come to school prepared, the school should be ready for the children." Similar discussions of philosophy toward parents, home visiting, and other family-oriented topics were common.

Linking with other programs: Transition Teams became a catalyst for team members to think about connections that could be made with other programs or organizations that had common goals. For example, the team at one school became interested in family literacy programs and how Transition could dovetail with the family literacy concept. Two team members attended a family literacy conference funded through the Transition Project. The team, along with district office staff, wrote a proposal that involved collaboration among the Transition Project, Head Start, Even Start, and the school district, to begin an on-site family literacy project. The project has been funded and will begin full operation in January 1994. These types of linkages among programs are essential to institutionalizing Transition-type goals and objectives in public schools.

Evaluator impressions of the positive effects of Transition Teams were verified by others during Spring interviews. The teams were considered to be one of the most effective mechanisms for communication among the various staffs by the majority of people interviewed. One logistical problem related to team functioning was mentioned during interviews--that of scheduling team meetings so that all the key members could attend. Respondents noted that variations in the schedules of Head Start and public school teachers made it difficult to find mutually convenient regular meeting times.

Interview data regarding program implementation generally are corroborated by results from other data sources presented in this section. Several of the common themes that emerged from the interviews are summarized below:

There is a strong philosophical alignment between the public schools and Head Start regarding comprehensive services. This match was expressed by all public school teachers and administrators who were interviewed. School staff indicated that, prior to the Transition Project, the schools had fallen short of delivering truly comprehensive services because they lacked the human resources to provide them. The Transition Project had raised school expectations, broadened their view of what constitutes comprehensive services, and made the services possible by providing qualified staff. For example:

"Transition is much more comprehensive in looking at all the children's needs... The parent and family components are much more formalized than we had before."

"Transition fits exactly with everything we're trying to accomplish with families by forcing the issue of parent involvement."

The Transition Project has substantially changed the relationship between Head Start and

the Transition schools. Staff from the schools, the Transition Project, and Head Start felt that the project has created mutual respect, understanding, and trust between the two institutions (Head Start and public schools) that did not exist before. The major change is that Head Start, which had been a separate entity even though it existed on two of the school campuses, is being integrated into the total school culture. Head Start staff expressed that they feel like equals who have expertise they can share. School staff expressed a better understanding of the Head Start philosophy and goals and a desire to work together. Some typical comments:

"Transition has enhanced Head Start's standing as professionals and peers in educating children. Schools are seeing the bigger picture of how they can collaborate with us."

"Getting information from Head Start about families has helped us. And with Head Start staff knowing more about the school, they are more comfortable talking with parents about their children starting public school."

"We are less worried about each others' territory now. We are just looking at commonalities of purpose for the kids."

Decision-making about the Transition Project is viewed as collaborative and team-oriented at the site level, although more progress is needed across sites and within institutions. Every person interviewed said they felt they had a role in making decisions about the project at their site. Transition Teams were cited often as an excellent mechanism for involving staff in decision-making. Communication was perceived to be very open, despite some communication problems associated with new groups of people meeting together for the first time (e.g., who is supposed to attend which meetings; who should receive particular written communications). Some people expressed concerns that it had been difficult to get parents involved in making programmatic decisions, although they said parents are involved at the classroom level through parent meetings. Shared decision-making tended to occur within sites but not between sites. While this was not viewed as a problem to staff at the school sites, project staff expressed a desire to have more involvement across sites through more representation on the Transition Advisory Council. Some staff also expressed that their ideas for program changes had to be approved at higher levels within their organization, and that sometimes suggestions seemed to get lost or be turned down.

The Transition Project has improved connections between home and school. Transition school teachers and principals felt strongly that the project had strengthened the link between the school and the homes of children in Transition classrooms, primarily through the role of the family advocate. Teachers noted that Transition children seem to have a more supportive home environment than children they had taught in previous years. Teachers expressed that they had better relationships with families which were attributed to the Transition Project. The option of having family advocates follow-up on concerns about situations in the home was also cited as a major strength.

The limited scope of the Transition Project is a concern to both project and school staff. Because this is a demonstration project, it is exclusionary by nature. The program exists in a total of only nine classrooms in the three schools. At two of the schools, this meant that some teachers and classrooms were part of the project and some were not. Because of the intensive family service component for Transition classrooms, this has created a "have's and have-not's" situation within school buildings. Selecting first grade teachers for participation in year two of the project created some conflicts for principals and teachers. In addition, unless the original project is expanded at the federal level, classrooms will be phased-out of the project as the two cohorts of children move up through the grades.

Families and children are also included or excluded from the project. Only former Head Start children are guaranteed continued Transition services through grade three. Non-Head Start children who were in Transition classrooms for kindergarten might be placed in non-Transition classrooms for subsequent grades in order to create heterogeneous groups of children in classrooms. Family advocates and teachers expressed concern about withdrawing Transition services from children and

families who had not attended Head Start.

Locating Head Start programs on the school campus is an important ingredient for effective implementation of Transition activities. Head Start programs are located on the campus of Machan and Crockett schools, but not on the campus of Encanto school. All staff associated with the Encanto Transition Project viewed this as a substantial barrier to effectively implementing Transition activities. There was little communication between kindergarten and Head Start teachers. Head Start children did not take part in any activities with kindergarten children at Encanto School. Encanto kindergarten teachers did observe the Head Start classrooms, and the kindergarten rooms were open for visits from Head Start parents who were registering their children for kindergarten.

School staff are concerned about institutionalizing Transition services after the project cycle ends. School personnel expressed that it would be very difficult to support these types of services (e.g., one family advocate per 35 families) or expand services to other classrooms on existing budgets.

Logistical issues related to scheduling, communication, and space have created some barriers to effective implementation. Staff expressed concerns about a variety of logistical problems related to year one implementation. These included a lack of adequate office space at the schools for additional family advocates that would be hired for year two; lack of adequate office resources (e.g., computers, typewriters) to do the job; and lack of time, especially meeting time for teachers. Scheduling of Transition Team meetings created some problems for Head Start teachers who typically teach only in the morning or the afternoon. Some staff indicated frustration about Transition communications not always being sent to the appropriate staff members. In the words of one teacher, "A lot of communication needs to be more formally structured."

There is a discrepancy between the public school and Head Start systems regarding some policies and procedures. Head Start has stricter standards for child safety and nutrition than do the public schools. Some of the policies are required by the state for preschool licensing. Public school staff indicated some frustration with Head Start policies about restrictions related to food. For example, Head Start does not allow food items that are prepared in the home to be served at any school-related events such as pot-lucks; Head Start children are not allowed to have treats at any school-related events. These policies were perceived by school staff to inhibit some types of activities between Head Start and kindergarten classes. Another policy that created some problems when teachers did class activities together was that, when Head Start children leave their classroom to go elsewhere on the school campus, it has to be treated as a field trip and requires parental permission.

■ ■ ■

Chapter

4 CONCLUSIONS

Previous research has shown immediate (i.e., within six months of exiting the program) cognitive gains for Head Start children compared to similar children who did not attend Head Start. However, the gains diminish during the early years of elementary school. One of the major goals of the National Head Start-Public School Transition Project is maintaining these early benefits through the primary grades and beyond. The other stated goals are developing successful collaborative strategies for delivering comprehensive services, and determining what impact comprehensive services in the primary grades have on children and families. Desired outcomes for the Arizona Transition Project are aligned with these national goals, but are more specific regarding actual desired outcomes for children and families.

The local evaluation involves examining outcomes related to four areas: children, families, the system, and policy. Preliminary data from the first year evaluation have established a baseline against which data from subsequent years can be compared. The data also provide indications of outcome differences between children from Transition and control schools and extensive information about the implementation process. It is expected that collection of information from children and families until the children complete grade three will provide the total data set necessary to fully address each of the evaluation questions.

Overall, year one data show promising trends for outcomes related to children and the delivery system; family data do not reveal major differences in outcomes between the Transition and control groups. Implications of these data and associated recommendations are discussed in this section.

Children

Achievement trends during year one are encouraging, particularly the finding that Transition children scored significantly higher than did control children on three of six cognitive measures. In addition, children in both groups made significant gains from Fall to Spring on five of the six measures, even though only about five months elapsed between testing periods. Children in both groups began the year at fairly low percentiles but gained percentile position from Fall to Spring on four of the six tests, showing a positive progression in learning. These percentile scores show where the children stand in comparison to a normative sample of same-age students who took the same tests.

There was a dramatic loss of percentile rank from Fall to Spring on the Passage Comprehension test for both Transition and control groups, who lost 35 and 16 percentile points respectively. The Passage Comprehension subtest requires a student to point to the picture represented by a written two-to-three word phrase. Early childhood educators might argue that this skill is not expected to be learned by the end of kindergarten, especially in a developmentally appropriate program. Nonetheless, the normative comparison shows that most children of the same age can perform this task.

In summary, positive trends were found in achievement overall, with Transition children performing better than control children on most measures. Repeated testing in the Spring of each year through the end of grade three holds the potential to answer the long-term question of whether gains will be maintained and enhanced as a result of Transition services, reversing the fade-out effect in achievement outcomes.

Two other important child outcomes relate to *adjustment to school* and *child health*. For these indicators, no significant differences between groups were found. Children and their parents from both Transition and control groups rated the children's adjustment to school very positively, and school attendance patterns for the kindergarten year were virtually identical for both groups. Indicators of child health also revealed a positive picture for both Transition and control students, with teachers and parents rating the vast majority of children to be in good to excellent health. Spring data show that child safety and well-being are more serious concerns for teachers than child health per se. Teachers reported concerns about the conditions under which some children live at home; some form of neglect or abuse in the home is affecting almost one in five of the children in the study.

Parents from both groups said their children received satisfactory health and dental care, the majority through AHCCCS. With 91 percent of the children in the study reported to have medical coverage, they are above the state average of 86 percent (Flinn Foundation, 1989). Comparisons with other data from the Flinn report also show that study participants appear to be better "users" of the health care system than is typical statewide. For example, while the report revealed that only 65 percent of children in the city of Phoenix had been treated by a dentist in the past 12 months, 78 percent of interview respondents reported their children make a dental visit at least once a year.

Overall, the relatively positive ratings for children's adjustment to school and child health are somewhat surprising considering the extreme poverty reported by families. Substantial evidence elsewhere (Flinn Foundation, 1989; Kornreich, Sandler & Hall, 1992; Vandegrift, Bierlein & Greene, 1991) shows that economically disadvantaged children have a difficult time adjusting to school and that they do not receive adequate health care. One possible explanation for the positive indicators for both Transition and control groups is that they are related to the children's Head Start experience, with its intensive focus on family development and child health. Data from future years of the study will show whether continuation of those services results in more positive outcomes for Transition children compared to control children who do not receive services.

Families

Baseline interview data related to *family self-sufficiency* show that, despite extremely low incomes, most families report they are meeting their basic needs (food, shelter, clothing, medical care) through a combination of earnings and public assistance. Many families, however, lack resources essential to true self-sufficiency -- good jobs, money to pay bills and buy necessities, dependable transportation, and child care. Also noted from the data is that the type of public assistance being provided tends to be directed toward fixing problems (e.g., food stamps, AFDC) rather than preventing them (e.g., counseling services, parenting education, literacy education). Data from subsequent years of the evaluation should show whether the more preventive nature of Transition services increases indicators of self-sufficiency among Transition families.

Results suggested a discrepancy between parents and teachers regarding their perception of the level of *parent involvement* in their children's education. Parents reported a high level of involvement with children both at home and at school, including more than half who said they volunteer regularly (more than once a month) at the school. In contrast, Transition school teachers felt that, while the Transition Project had increased the level of parent involvement, much more progress was needed in garnering parent support and participation in the classroom and the school. Several explanations are offered to account for this discrepancy: parents and teachers may hold different expectations for involvement, parents may be making socially acceptable responses to interview questions, or there may be a general lack of communication

between parents and teachers about their involvement. Some Head Start staff suggested that teachers need to develop more receptive attitudes toward parents in the classroom and more skills in how to involve parents in meaningful ways.

Qualitative data indicate that Transition *family services*, provided through the family advocates, tend to occur both formally and informally. Formal aspects are defined by requirements of the family advocate position -- making home visits, helping families assess their needs and set goals, making referrals, facilitating parent meetings. These services are documented by family advocates and captured in the evaluation data which show that a typical family has two home visits and two referrals to other agencies during a school year.

In addition to these formal activities, however, family advocates also serve in many informal capacities that may be equally important in terms of building trust, providing support, and helping families develop. Many of these informal activities were observed and discussed with family advocates during the year -- bringing families food and clothing, chatting with parents before and after school, teaching English classes, translating school announcements into Spanish. All five of the family advocates who were interviewed commented that the formal procedures used in delivering family services are not always appropriate for relating to families, and actually may interfere with effective interactions when initial contacts are made. Family services can be offered, but cannot be forced on families who do not want them. Furthermore, families may be in different stages of trust and readiness for taking advantage of services that are offered.

Data from year one are not sufficient to draw clear conclusions directly related to family outcomes. The complexity of family life and family systems make it difficult to document and assess tangible outcomes, particularly within a period of a few months. More detailed longitudinal data related to family outcomes (e.g., income, employment, availability and use of resources, and involvement in school) from both Transition and control families will be necessary to make inferences about how the project impacts families.

System

One of the most compelling results regarding systemic change was teacher responses to the *School Survey of Early Childhood Programs*. Significant differences between ratings of Transition and control school teachers provide strong evidence that school practices related to Transition are occurring as planned. Such activities include exchange of information between preschool (i.e., Head Start) and kindergarten teachers regarding curriculum, individual children, and school records, and structured events held for parents of entering kindergartners. Interview, observation, and survey data further confirm the finding that key components of the project are in a relatively advanced stage of implementation. In sum, the evidence show that the Transition Project is indeed being implemented as planned.

Another change expected at the system level is the *relationship between Head Start and the public schools*. All data indicate that this relationship did change in the desired direction -- the two organizations are collaborating to improve both educational and social services. The increased level of trust, respect, and collegiality between Head Start and public school staff was emphasized. Public school personnel were particularly impressed with the new meaning and breadth the Transition Project brought to their school's concept of comprehensive services. While Transition school staff said they had attempted to deliver comprehensive services prior to the Transition Project, and had the commitment to do so, they often lacked the resources to provide the intense family and health services provided by the project. In conclusion, there has been substantial coordination and collaboration between public school and Head Start staff in the Transition schools -- one of the major goals of the Transition Project.

Classroom observation data show that indicators of developmentally appropriate practice were more pronounced in Transition than control classrooms, and were most fully implemented in Head Start classrooms. Although Transition teachers rated themselves quite highly in use of DAP, some Head Start staff expressed a belief that public schools are somewhat lax in using the full range of DAP

components. Continued training in DAP methods should help to refine the implementation of a developmental early childhood program.

Several other results at the system level were revealed. Transition staff feel involved in decision-making at the site level, but more interaction and involvement is needed among sites and within organizations. While the Transition Project has improved connections between home and school, a higher level of parent involvement is desired. Finally, schools are concerned about some aspects of the project such as limiting services to a small number of classrooms and institutionalizing services if the project ends.

Summary

The Transition Project has made substantial progress during the first year of implementation in achieving its objectives. Transition students are outscoring control students on most cognitive measures; staff are enthusiastic about project goals and services; Transition services are being implemented as planned; start-up problems have been dealt with through a well-developed communication network among staff; people feel they are included in making decisions that affect them. Children in the two groups did not differ on indicators of their adjustment to school or health. Much more data are needed to fully address each of the evaluation questions, particularly data that provide indications of desired family outcomes. Table 18 shows a summary of results from the year-one evaluation.

Recommendations

As with any program, continuous formative changes are needed to keep the project on track. The following recommendations are offered to Southwest Human Development based on year-one evaluation findings:

- Use achievement data to identify possible gaps in developing student skills, particularly for reading.

- Continue to offer teacher training to develop skills in the use of developmentally appropriate practice.

- Locate Head Start programs on public school campuses whenever possible to increase the potential for Transition activities to occur.

- Develop specific guidelines for Transition school teachers about how to involve parents in meaningful classroom and school activities.

- Use evaluation data on family services to determine whether services are occurring at the desired level.

- Examine both the formal and informal roles of family advocates in relation to providing services to families. Identify important informal functions and make them part of the family service delivery system.

- Foster the continued development of Transition Teams, including working on solutions to logistical problems such as scheduling and planning time.

- Examine the project decision-making structure, particularly with regard to staff and parent involvement in programmatic decisions beyond the site level. Provide for wider inclusion when possible.

- Together with public schools, explore more linkages with other programs and funding sources to insure that Transition practices can be institutionalized when the demonstration project ends.

- Disseminate information about the Transition Project to other educators and to policy makers through professional conferences, governing board presentations, and legislative groups.

Table 18

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM YEAR-ONE TRANSITION PROJECT EVALUATION

Evaluation Question	Year-One Status
Children	
1. Do Head Start (HS) children in Transition classrooms maintain and/or show gains to a greater degree than HS children in control classrooms on the following indicators: a) cognitive skills b) social and emotional development c) general health d) adjustment to school?	*a) significant differences favoring Transition group* *b) more evidence needed* *c) no differences found* *d) no differences found*
2. Do HS children in transition classrooms exhibit more positive attitudes toward school than HS children in control classrooms?	*no differences found*
3. Do HS children in Transition classrooms experience a smoother transition and better continuity of programming from HS to kindergarten and from one primary grade to the next than HS children in control classrooms?	*positive trend; more evidence needed*
Families	
4. Do Transition families receive more social service support through the public school system and show more evidence of stability and self-sufficiency than control families?	*more evidence needed*
5. Do Transition families show better parenting skills and have more involvement in and support for education than control families?	*more evidence needed*
6. Do parents in Transition schools participate in and complete more literacy and English as a Second Language classes and workshops than parents in control schools?	*more evidence needed*
7. Do parents in Transition schools perceive home-school communication to be more effective and satisfactory than parents in control schools?	*no differences found*
System	
8. Do Transition schools provide a more coordinated service delivery system (i.e., continuous and comprehensive) than control schools?	*significant differences favoring Transition schools*
9. Do transition schools provide a more developmentally appropriate curriculum, more satisfactory communication strategies, better staff development, and more opportunities for parent participation than control schools?	*positive trend; more evidence needed*
10. Compared to control school teachers, are Transition school primary level teachers more skilled in working with the special needs of at-risk children and families?	*more evidence needed*
11. What does a successful collaborative process look like?	*evidence of collaboration includes common goals, shared decision-making, and open communication*
Policy	
12. Did the results of this project affect in state and local level public policies and level of fiscal support that reflect a comprehensive plan for addressing child and family needs in a holistic manner?	*too early for analysis*

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APPENDIX A

SUMMARY OF DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-Revised (PPVT-R): This test is designed to measure a person's receptive (i.e., hearing) vocabulary for Standard American English. It can be used with individuals ages 2-1/2 through 40 who understand Standard English to some degree. Each item consists of a choice of four pictures. The examiner names one and the child points to the picture named. Items are arranged in order of increasing difficulty and only the range of items appropriate to a person's abilities is given.

Test de Vocabulario en Imagenes Peabody (TVIP): This test is the Spanish-language, Hispanic-American adaptation of the PPVT-R. It measures an individual's receptive, or hearing, vocabulary for single Spanish words and shows the extent of Spanish vocabulary acquisition for the subject. Test construction and administration are the same as the PPVT-R.

Woodcock Johnson Tests of Achievement-Revised (WJ-R): This battery of tests measures cognitive abilities, scholastic aptitudes, and achievement. It can be used with individuals at all levels of education, preschool through adult. Four of the nine subtests included in the Standard Battery are used in the Transition study: letter-word identification, passage comprehension, calculation, and applied problems.

Teacher Rating of Students: This rating system was developed by the evaluators of the Illinois Transition Project and adapted for use in the Arizona evaluation. The purpose of the measure is to obtain teacher judgments about student progress in eight areas of skill and adjustment to school. Teachers rate the areas using a four-point rating scale: 1) requires considerable development; 2) needs some development; 3) generally a positive area; and 4) strongly positive area.

What I Think of School: Children report their own perceptions of their early school experiences through engaging in a dialogue with the examiner. Eight key questions are asked about the child's attitude toward school. Children indicate their responses by pointing to choices on a rating card. The three-point scale ranges from 1) least positive response, to 3) most positive response. The instrument can be used with children ages four to eight.

Your Child's Adjustment to School: Part of the Spring family interview, this instrument is designed to obtain information about parents' perceptions of the child's school experiences and the degree to which parents are pleased or displeased with the school program. Parents respond using a 10-point rating scale, with 10 representing the most positive perception.

Child Health Questionnaire: Teachers and parents rate the child's general health and well-being. The parent questionnaire is part of the Fall family interview. The teacher questionnaire is completed in Spring.

Family Resource Scale: This instrument is designed to measure the extent to which different types of resources are adequate in households with young children. The scale includes 30 items rank-ordered from most-to-least basic. It is included in the Fall family interview and is verbally administered by the interviewer. Parents respond using a five-point rating scale designating 1) not at all adequate, to 5) almost always adequate.

Family Background and Update: This information is initially collected in the Fall family interview, with select items followed-up in the Spring. Items relate to family demographics, socioeconomic factors, family characteristics, and support services the family is receiving.

Local Family Interview Questions: The local interview questions are designed to supplement the national family interview by asking questions directly related to transition services and local evaluation questions. Items include whether services are available to families, whether they are accessed, and whether they are adequate.

Family Services End-of-Year Summary: This form, completed by Transition Family Advocates at the end of the year, includes a summary of the number of contacts made with Transition families. It also shows the number of hours parents have documented for working with their child at home on school work and volunteering for or participating in school activities.

School Survey of Early Childhood Programs: This instrument is designed to obtain information from teachers about the extent to which transition-type activities occur in the school between kindergarten and pre-kindergarten staff. Items pertain to pre-kindergarten programs and staff in general, rather than specifically to Head Start.

Innovations Component Checklist: Three separate checklists were developed according to the guidelines for constructing them provided by Hall and Hord (1987). They are part of the Concerns-Based Adoption Model for assessing the change process. Each instrument describes the components of an innovation, such as Transition services, and three levels of implementation, from no implementation to full implementation. Program participants (teachers and family advocates) then rate the degree to which they believe the program is being implemented.

Key Collaborator Interviews: Interview protocols for local interviews include open-ended questions about the individual's perceptions of the Transition program, the collaborative process, successful strategies, and barriers to success.

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